(b) to (d) All the surveys for new rail lines in Andhra Pradesh sanctioned during the last three years from 2001-02 to 2003-04 have been completed during the period and decision taken.

Village on Wheels

1727. SHRI LALITSURI:
SHRIV. HANUMANTHA RAO:
SHRI DATTA MEGHE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have introduced a Village on Wheels' train on the lines of 'Palace on Wheels';

(b) if so, the details and the salient features;

(c) the number of such trains which are proposed to be introduced and the area to be covered by each train;

(d) the per passenger fare of this train and the facilities to be provided to the passengers travelling by this train;

(e) whether Railways also propose to start similar trains from other important places in Northern (Jammu Tawi and Delhi), Western (Udaipur, Mumbai and Goa) and Southern (Bangalore, Chennai etc.) regions of the country;

(f)ifso, by when; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Ministry of Railways has launched a new special tourist train called the 'Bharat Darshan' consisting of sleeper class coaches to run on pre-determined circuits to enable tourists from different regions to visit important places of religious, cultural and historical importance at an affordable cost as a comprehensive package including boarding and lodging, sightseeing, local transport, meals etc. The first train has been flagged off on 29/11/2004 in the following circuit:

Rajendra Nagar-Patna-Varanasi-Agra-Mathura-Delhi-Jammu Tawi (Vaishno Devi)-Amritsar-Haridwar (Rishikesh)-Patna-Rajendra Nagar.

It is a 9-days trip with an all inclusive tariff of Rs. 4,500/-per passenger.

(c) to (g) Similar other trains, upon the responses received on the operation of the trains in the initial circuits, would be introduced on various circuits covering tourist destinations in Northern, Eastern, Western and Southern India. The fare on the "Bharat Darshan" Special Tourist Train is approximately Rs. 450/-per passenger per day.

Dedicated rail lines for goods

1728. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that railways propose to prepare a comprehensive plan for dedicated rail liijes for goods in the country;

(b) if so, the board details of modernization project;

(c) the total outlay involved in the project;

(d) whether this has since been prepared and submitted to the Planning Commission; and

(e) if so, the present status of the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS: (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

New railway line between Mumbai and Pune

†1729. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about a distance of 50 kilometers can be reduced between Mumbai and Pune by laying a new railway line from Ksara Bank to New Mumbai;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to conduct any survey in this context;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.